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LETTER DATED 3 JUNE 1996 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I.
OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF ZAIRE TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Zaire, I have the honour to raise the most serious objections to the content of the letter dated 24 May 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1996/374).

The Government of Zaire vehemently rejects the action taken by the Permanent Representative of Rwanda with regard to the situation in Massisi.

The action by Rwanda was taken in complete ignorance of all the texts that govern the functioning of the Security Council.

Indeed, the unrest that has been occurring for some time in the Massisi region is a completely internal situation which the Zairian authorities are taking steps to resolve. Consequently, the situation referred to by Rwanda is not one of the situations described in Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations, which speaks of a dispute between parties which is "likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security". Moreover, Rwanda is not involved in the unrest in Massisi and therefore cannot invoke Article 35 of the Charter.

It would be an unfortunate precedent for the Security Council to heed Rwanda's request for a meeting to consider the situation in the Massisi region. By following the Permanent Representative of Rwanda in his ignorance of the basic texts of the Security Council, the Council would be opening a Pandora's box that it will have difficulty closing.

In his letter, the Permanent Representative of Rwanda speaks of "Kinyarwanda-speaking Zairian nationals and old case-load Rwandan refugees".

This is the fait accompli that Kigali wishes to create by preventing the return of refugees to Rwanda.

The Government of Zaire would like to inform the Security Council that, of the languages spoken in Zaire, Kinyarwanda is not one of them. It is a language of Rwandans transplanted by colonization in 1929 and 1957-1959, who have never been integrated into the local population. Even the 1972 refugees, one of whom was the Permanent Representative of Rwanda, who signed the above-mentioned letter, have never been integrated.

As proof, the day after the Rwandan Patriotic Front took power in Kigali, Mr. Manzi Bakuramutsa, with Zairian diplomatic passports, which enabled him to hold, on his quota, important positions in a United Nations agency, returned to serve his people. Will Zaire have to request Rwanda to return him as a Zairian refugee?

At the end of his letter, the Permanent Representative of Rwanda speaks of preventing "genocide in Zaire".

The Government of Zaire notes that the word "genocide" is not a part of its political landscape. Zaire requests those who have made a science of genocide and a means of obtaining and keeping power, to spare it that fate.

A large contingent of the Zairian armed forces has been sent to Massisi in order to provide security for the local population and pacify and control that troubled region.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) LUKABU KHABOUJI N'ZAJI
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Minister Plenipotentiary
Deputy Permanent Representative